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Weekend, May 6-8, 2016 metro.us | t: MetroPhilly | f: MetroPhilly

BLOOMBERG TAKES A SWIG

The former NYC mayor gives Philly's soda tax push a big boost.4

'Tis the season for sneezin'. 2

Kentucky Derby: We got the horse right here. 28

SUMMER AT THE MOVIES

There's more than just popcorn fare. Here's our guide to cinema both big and small. 19-20

Clockwise: Weiner-Dog **IFC FILMS**, Captain America: Civil War **MARVEL**, Finding Dory **DISNEY PIXAR**, The Lobster **A24**

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3 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

PRINCE HAD PAINKILLER PERCOCET IN HIS SYSTEM: REPORTS

1 Music superstar Prince's autopsy found the painkiller Percocet in his system, the Minneapolis Star Tribune and KSTP-TV reported on Thursday, citing sources close to the investigation. Prince also had a dangerously low red blood cell count, indicating he had been ill, Minneapolis ABC affiliate KSTP-TV said, citing two unnamed law enforcement officials. A spokeswoman for the local medical examiner's office that conducted a post-mortem examination of Prince declined to confirm the reports. The cause of Prince's death remained undetermined. REUTERS

NC LAWMAKER DISMISSES US DEADLINE TO CHANGE RESTROOM LAW

2 A top Republican lawmaker in North Carolina said the state would not be "bullied" by the U.S. Justice Department into meeting a Monday deadline to change a new law regulating which bathrooms transgender people can use. "We will take no action by Monday," House Speaker Tim Moore told reporters in Raleigh, the day after the federal government told the state that the law enacted in March violated the U.S. Civil Rights Act. The law requires transgender people to use bathrooms that correspond with the sex on their birth certificate rather than their gender identity. The Justice Department said North Carolina was discriminating against transgender state employees and it had until Monday to say whether it would remedy the violations. REUTERS

REGULATORS BAN E-CIGARETTE, CIGAR SALES TO MINORS

3 U.S. regulators on Thursday took their first steps to crack down on e-cigarettes and cigars, increasingly popular among American youth, and banned sales to anyone under age 18 in hopes of preventing a new generation from becoming hooked on nicotine. The Food and Drug Administration's action brought regulation of e-cigarettes, cigars, pipe tobacco and hookah tobacco in line with existing rules for cigarettes, smokeless tobacco and roll-your-own tobacco. The new rules take effect in 90 days. Health advocacy groups hailed the move, while industry officials said it could cripple many of the smaller companies that make e-cigarette devices they say can help traditional smokers quit. Wall Street analysts expect the regulation to herald a new wave of consolidation led by big tobacco companies. REUTERS

Out with the heater headaches and in with the allergy sneezes. GETTY IMAGES

Feeling crummy this spring? High pollen count may be cause

The Delaware Valley is experiencing a "bad season" for anyone who suffers from a sensitivity to pollen in the air.

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If you've been feeling sluggish, headachey, had a sore throat or itchy eyes in the last few weeks, you're not alone.

The cause may be levels of pollen in the air around the Delaware Valley that have been reaching two or even three times their normal amount this spring, said Dr. Donald Dvorin, co-founder of The Asthma Center, which has offices in Center City and South Jersey.

"We are definitely very high for the area," he said. "The last few days, we've had doubles or triples in one day. That's what I believe is a bad season. It's so variable, with lows and highs, that people are really noticing it."

Dvorin pointed out that most trees do not open up and release their pollen until temps rise above 40 degrees. With an unusually high number of cold mornings this spring, the release of pollen isn't occurring until later in the day, when more people are out, active, and inhaling the pollen.

Inhaling pollen can cause swelling of your sinuses, cause eye irritation, and levels of fatigue similar to having a bad cold, Dvorin said.

> *"That's what I believe is a bad season. It's so variable, with lows and highs, that people are really noticing it."*
> Dvorin

"That does impact people's quality of life," Dvorin said. "People are out of work definitely when it happens."

Dvorin, who has been taking air pollen counts since 1986, has been posting the pollen count every day on The Asthma Center's Facebook.

He's also treating patients. He said he saw a woman in her late 40s who was actually suffering from hives from exposure to grass and grass pollen.

"When you look at those long blades of grass, the top and edges of the blades, that is pollen," he said.

As temperatures continue warming, there will just be even more pollen, Dvorin cautioned.

"If we do get windy and stay dry, we are going to really see a higher pollen count," Dvorin said. "We have yet to see any pine pollen in any significant numbers, and with the pinelands around here, pretty close to Philadelphia, we'll really see a big surge in that — it could be as early as next week."

Dvorin urged people who know they have allergies to grass or tree pollen to check the pollen count daily, and if its high, to avoid going outside before 10 a.m.

Another step people can take is to change their clothes when they get home, including their shoes, and to even take a shower to remove pollen from their body.

"If they leave it on, they could have a later reaction," he said.

Antihistamines, nasal sprays like Flonase, or prescription medications could help people who can't shake their symptoms, he said.

Daily pollen counts

Visit Asthmacenter.com for Dr. Dvorin's daily pollen count.

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Bloomberg FILE PHOTO

Bloomberg-backed, pro-soda tax ad campaign launches in Philly

"Philadelphians for a Fair Future" put out an $825,000 30-second ad Thursday in support of a soda tax.

JENNY DEHUFF
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Mayor Jim Kenney's proposed 3-cents-per-ounce tax on soda got a big boost on Thursday with the launch of a new ad campaign costing nearly a million dollars of former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg's money.

The new, 30-second ad, titled "Lift," opens with a shot of a pair of sneakers dangling from a telephone wire to a woman's soft-spoken voice which starts out saying, "Philadelphia's chance to help lift our children with citywide pre-K is now."

It then quotes the Philadelphia Daily News and Inquirer endorsements Kenney received in March for the soda tax proposal.

The new ad campaign will air on local television stations for the next three weeks. It's the central element of an $825,000 advertising purchase that includes TV, radio and digital billboards, all sponsored with funding from Bloomberg and Philadelphians for a Fair Future. The group claims to represent a coalition of 62 organizations from around the city — all focused on raising public awareness about the importance of the mayor's budget initiatives.

"It's great to have the support of a nationally recognized businessman," Kenney said Thursday. "I hope these ads will correct the misinformation the other side has already spent millions spreading."

During his time as New York City mayor, Bloomberg pushed for a citywide ban on the sale of sugary juice larger than 16 ounces. His efforts, however, were unsuccessful.

On Wednesday, members of a group called the Philadelphians Against the Grocery Tax came out in full force on the north apron of City Hall to protest the tax, complete with a giant, mock grocery aisle display of sugary drinks. Shortly afterward City Council's Committee of the Whole held an hours-long hearing where dozens of people came forward to testify on the tax — both for and against.

"After failing to ban oversized sodas in New York City, it now appears that Michael Bloomberg wants to impose his oversized ego and will on tax-weary Philadelphians," Daniel Grace, secretary-treasurer for Teamsters Local 830, said during Wednesday night's hearing.

$825K
ADVERTISING PURCHASE FOR THE CAMPAIGN

"I also find it ironic that the pro-soda tax group can come up with nearly $1 million virtually overnight to pay for an advertising campaign, but claim to have no money or funding alternatives other than a regressive soda tax to pay for universal pre-K and other programs," Grace continued.

The head of another union, however, Gabe Morgan, vice president of 32BJ SEIU, said that his 18,500 members "understand better than most the struggles working and poor people have in this city."

"We support this because … when you look at other possible options, this really is the best one, and the need for pre-K and community schools is overwhelming," he said.

Kenney's proposed FY 2017 budget includes the three-cents-per-ounce tax on sugary drinks as a means to pay for $400 million in new investments over five years, including universal pre-K, community schools, improvements to parks and recreation centers and other initiatives.

Attempts to reach Bloomberg for comment were unsuccessful at press time.

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Sandusky granted hearing in bid for new trial

A Pennsylvania judge on Thursday granted convicted child molester Jerry Sandusky a hearing later this month to press his case for a new trial, four years after the former Penn State University football coach was found guilty of abusing 10 boys.

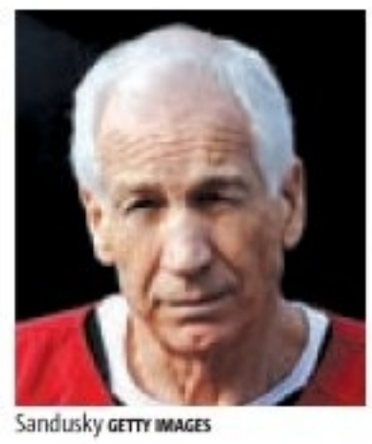
Lawyers for Sandusky can pursue several issues at the May 20 hearing, including the competency of his trial attorney, whether prosecutors and the judge who oversaw the grand jury withheld evidence and whether the state attorney general's office leaked sealed grand jury material to a reporter in an effort to persuade additional victims to come forward.

John Cleland, a visiting judge in the Centre County Court of Common Pleas in Bellefonte, Pennsylvania, had expressed skepticism regarding Sandusky's appeal during a court appearance on Monday but nevertheless ordered the evidentiary hearing.

Sandusky, 72, is serving 30-60 years in state prison after a jury convicted him in 2012 of molesting 10 boys at Penn State sports facilities or through the auspices of The Second Mile, his former charity.

He has already lost several previous appeals. The current claims were brought under the state's post-conviction relief act, which allows appeals based on ineffective legal counsel and constitutional violations, among other grounds.

To win a new trial, the defense must prove both that there was a violation of Sandusky's right to a fair trial, and that the violation created a "reasonable probability" of a different outcome, said Peter Goldberger, a lawyer in Philly. REUTERS



Sandusky GETTY IMAGES

Inside of a women's bathroom FLICKR

NJ man accused of hiding camera in dialysis center women's restroom

Authorities do not know how many women were recorded or when the camera was installed.

JASON NUCKOLLS
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letters@metro.us

A former employee of DaVita Dialysis Center in Mount Laurel was arrested Tuesday on allegations he hid a camera in the women's restroom.

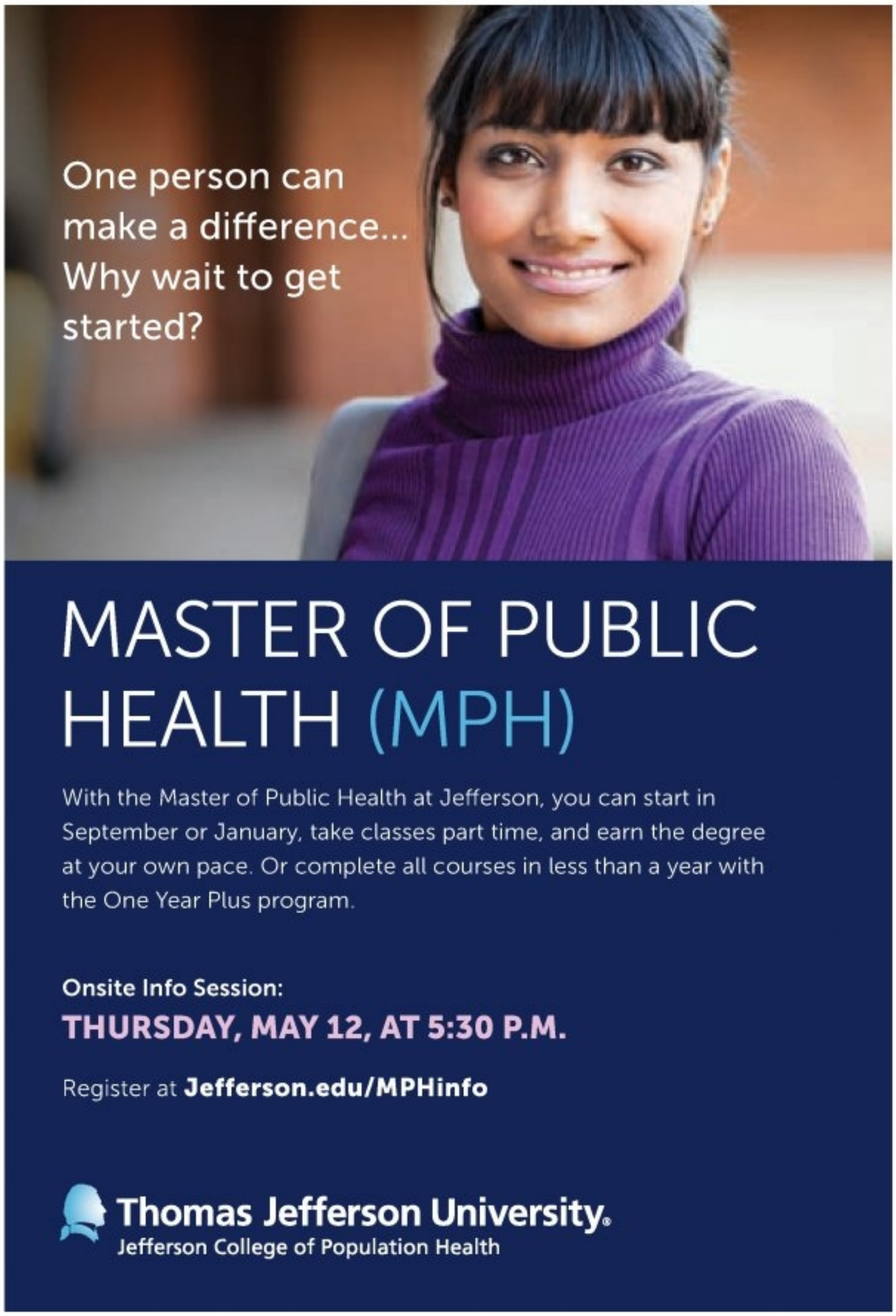
David B. Leftridge, 57, has been charged with invasion of privacy and tampering with evidence stemming from the discovery of a camera in his female co-workers' restroom at the dialysis center, the Courier-Post reported.

On April 22, police were notified that a compact video camera was uncovered in the restroom, NJ.com reported. A subsequent investigation of Leftridge's Sicklerville home revealed additional evidence related to the camera.

Authorities, though, do not know how many women were recorded or when the camera was installed, the Courier-Post added.

"We are actively assisting law enforcement in their investigation and have zero tolerance for any such alleged invasion of privacy," a statement from a DaVita representative was quoted by NJ.com, which added that Leftridge now no longer works there.

Leftridge was held at the Burlington County Jail on $50,000 bail, according to the Courier-Post.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Activists opposed to 'energy hub' proposal deliver petition to mayor

Environmental activists are planning a protest against the Philadelphia Energy Solutions refinery's proposed expansion.

SAM NEWHOUSE
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Teresa Hill knew something was wrong at her Southwest Philadelphia home as soon as she moved in. But she didn't know what it was at first.

"We found a beautiful house. … But as soon as we got out of the car, we started choking. We couldn't breathe," said Hill of two of her grandchildren, aged 2 and 6 at the time, who both have asthma.

"Every time I went to the store, they couldn't get back. … When my grandson went up and down the stairs, he was done. He couldn't do anything more," she said. "But I didn't know about the refinery."

Hill, a member of Action United, was at City Hall Thursday along with members of Philly Thrive and AFSCME 1199 to deliver 1,000 petitions calling on Mayor Jim Kenney and City Council to prevent an expansion of the Philadelphia Energy Solutions (PES) refinery in Southwest Philly as part of calls for the city to become an "energy hub."

Just the words "energy hub" received boos from the environmentalists, who oppose any expansion of the fossil fuels industry in the Philly area.

"The CEO of the South Philadelphia refinery wants to take advantage of our city's economic woes … and bring even more oil and natural gas into our city," said Zein Nakhoda, an organizer with Thrive Philly, referring to PES CEO Phil Rinaldi.

Activist Teresa Hill SAM NEWHOUSE

"It's a bad investment," Nakhoda said of expanding PES, pointing out that a larger refinery would rely on increased fracking operations. Meanwhile, fracking is slowing down across North America as oil prices are tanking worldwide.

"We can deal with the twin crises of economic hardship and climate change by investing in green jobs and renewable energy," Nakhoda said.

PES did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The words "energy hub" first started circulating after Philly City Council President Darrell Clarke pitched the concept after announcing that City Council would not allow former Mayor Michael Nutter to sell the municipally owned Philadelphia Gas Works for $1.86 billion to a private energy company.

Hill invited Clarke to come visit the neighborhood, from where she has moved. She pointed out that 70 percent of the students at her grandson's school have asthma.

"He should go door to door and see what it's like. … You should be thinking about the people that live there," Hill said. "They shouldn't be putting all of these fuels and fumes into the air."

Clarke did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Hill said she knows that area's air quality is worse because her own breathing problems have improved since moving away but worsen when she's back in the neighborhood canvassing for Action United.

"It's got to be the environment around there," she said.

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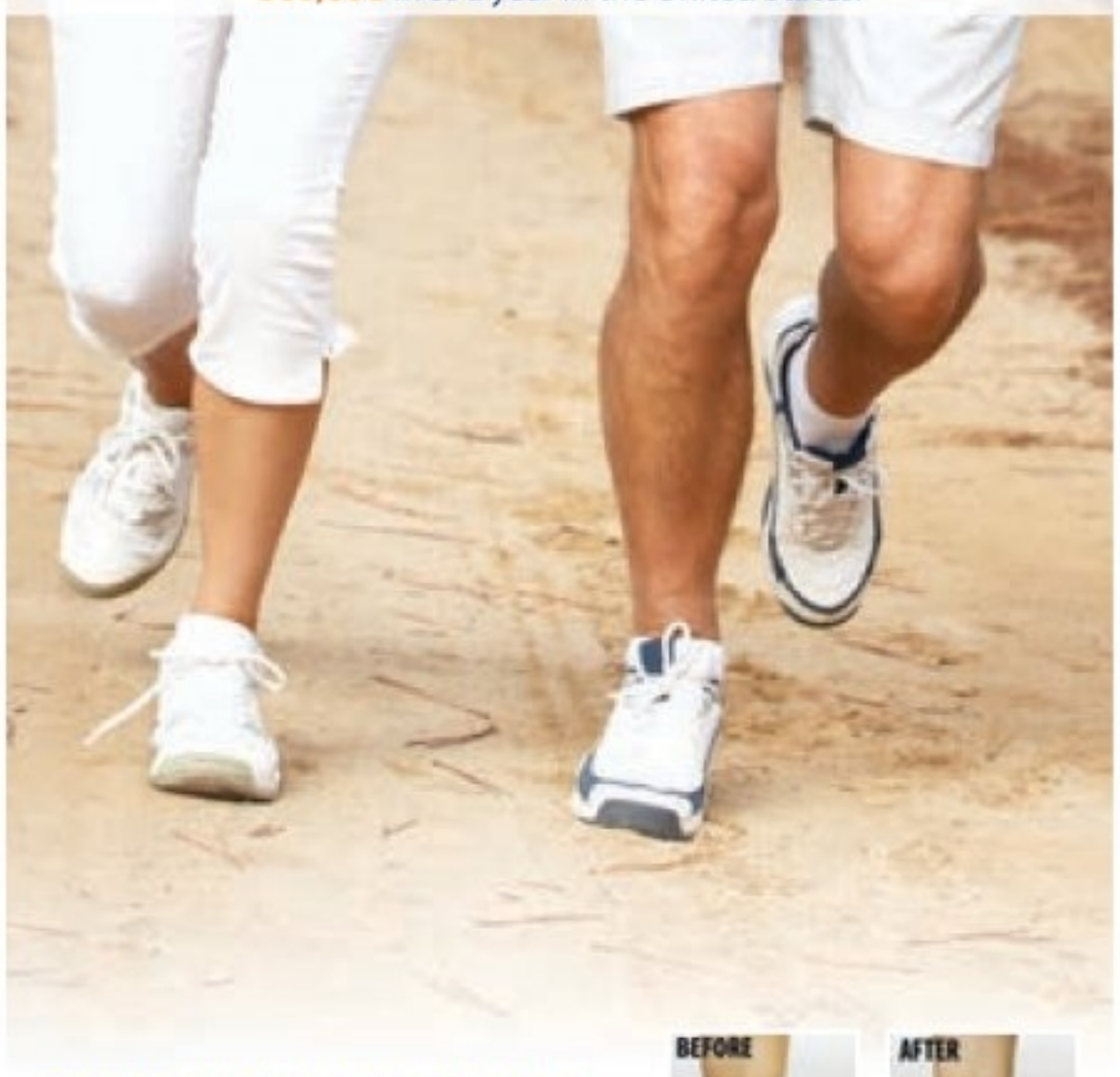

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A man drinks a bottle of soda. GETTY IMAGES

WORKING-CLASS PEOPLE WILL NOT BE IGNORED OVER SUGARY-DRINK TAX

THE ERNEST OPINION

ERNEST OWENS
@MrErnestOwens

I don't like to be lied to or lied about. Especially when the lie is coming from the mayor's office.

Wednesday's rally outside City Hall protesting the sugary drink tax, which is intended to fund Mayor Jim Kenney's universal pre-kindergarten initiative, was filled with concerned Philadelphians speaking out against this proposal.

Lauren Hitt, a spokesperson for the mayor's office, told the press that "the soda industry paid a lot of people to come in from New Jersey to make it seem like this opposition was driven by the people and not millionaires."

But I was there, and so were many working-class Philadelphians who weren't campaigning on behalf of any corporate interests or taking any of their money.

"There's got to be a better way to fund these schools then taxing my family," said Monica Brown, a Southwest Philly resident who works two jobs to support her three sons. "I am here because I can't afford another crazy expense for my family's tight budget."

Brown is part of Philadelphians Against the Grocery Tax Coalition, locals from small businesses and community organizations who oppose the tax. "It's not just soda they plan to tax, but many of the juices and other beverages that contain sugar," she added. "The mayor's office love calling it a soda tax because it makes it seem as though it's only one item. ... It's seriously a lot of the beverages at the grocery store that I buy to help feed my sons."

Kenney's office is using the big-bad-corporation fear tactic to avoid looking for alternative funding for universal pre-K. Blame the money-hungry private interests that are trying to take away from the poor.

I wonder how Kenney feels about outsiders such as Johnny Doc and George Norcross' influence on City Hall. Yeah, I'll wait.

But instead of trying to seriously address the regressive vibe of this tax on working-class Philadelphians who aren't being paid to take off work like Monica Brown to try stop this tax from affecting her — they would rather play the blame game.

I salute the three City Councillors — Jannie Blackwell, a Democrat from District Three; Maria D. Quinones-Sanchez, a Democrat representing the Seventh District; and Al Taubenberger, a Republican councilman at large — who have spoken out against this tax because their constituents would be disproportionately affected by it.

"Council can come up with other ways to do the right thing," Quinones-Sanchez told the crowd at Wednesday's rally.

I agree with her. With City Commissioners doing virtually nothing directly worthy of their six-figure salaries and other wasteful expenditures going completely unchecked, taxing the poor should be the last resort, not the only one.

"Kenney's office is using the big-bad-corporation fear tactic to avoid looking for alternative funding for universal pre-K."

YouTube

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Canada wildfire shutters oil sands plants, pipelines

While oil sands facilities are not in the fire's path, seven production companies and two pipeline operators have curbed activities to allow workers and others to get to safety.

Tyra Abo sits on a cot at a makeshift evacuee center in Lac la Biche, Alberta on Thursday after fleeing forest fires north of Fort McMurray. GETTY IMAGES

The wildfire that raged unchecked on Thursday in the city of Fort McMurray in the heart of the Canadian oil sands region knocked out as much as a third of the nation's daily crude capacity and closed some major pipelines.

At least 640,000 barrels per day of capacity was offline on Thursday, according to Reuters' calculations.

ConocoPhillips said on Thursday it had shut its Surmount operations and evacuated people and workers from site.

Nexen Energy, a wholly owned subsidiary of China's CNOOC, said late on Wednesday that it was shutting its Long Lake oil sands facility.

Long Lake can produce around 50,000 bpd of synthetic crude but has been operating at reduced rates since late January, when an explosion at the plant left two employees dead.

Suncor Energy Inc, whose oil sands operations are closest to the city, has closed its main mining site, which can produce up to 350,000 bpd.

Before the shutdown, the site was operating at reduced levels due to a turnaround there.

Due to the reduced availability of diluent in the region, the company said its thermal oil sands operations, including the Syncrude facilities, are all working at reduced rates.

It said its main plant 16 miles to the north was safe. REUTERS

Manhunt under way for escapee from NJ psychiatric hospital

The manhunt for an inmate who escaped a New Jersey psychiatric hospital entered its third day on Thursday amid heightened security at schools in the Jersey Shore town of Barnegat after he was spotted at a drugstore there.

Arthur Buckel, 38, was discovered missing on Tuesday from a minimum security unit at Ancora Psychiatric Hospital in Hammonton, said Captain Jack Sramaty, spokesman for the Ocean County prosecutor's office.

Buckel, who was two weeks away from parole after serving a three-year sentence for aggravated assault, drug possession and burglary, had previously served a 25-year sentence for manslaughter in the killing of a 10-month-old baby, he said.

Schools in Barnegat, about 50 miles east of the hospital, remained under police guard on Thursday after Buckel was spotted on Wednesday shopping at a CVS drugstore there. School Superintendent Karen Wood said the stepped-up security was expected to extend into Friday for all 3,100 students in the district. Students will have recess inside and police would supervise arrivals, dismissals and athletic practices.

Dozens of law enforcement officers from surrounding towns were searching for Buckel, Sramaty said. Residents were warned to keep their doors locked and vehicles secured.

"He wasn't armed on Tuesday morning when he left the prison but who knows what he's found," Sramaty said.

The New Jersey Department of Corrections did not immediately respond to a request for comment. REUTERS

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Striking union workers protest at Verizon shareholder meeting

The last contract negotiations in 2011 also led to a strike that ended in two weeks as the parties continued contract negotiations.

Dozens of Verizon Communications landline workers, on strike since mid-April after contract talks hit an impasse, marched on the company's annual shareholder meeting in Albuquerque, New Mexico, on Thursday.

The unions said about 15 protesters blocked traffic after they laid down atop a large banner on the street. The Albuquerque Police Department said no arrests were made but 15 people were cited.

More than 250 protesters, including workers and supporters, demonstrated at the meeting, where the agenda included an election for 13 directors and a vote on executive compensation.

Nearly 40,000 network technicians and customer service representatives of the company's Fios Internet, telephone and television services units walked off the job on April 13. The action was called by the Communications Workers of America and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

The strike is in its fourth week. Sticking points include offshore call-center jobs, job relocations and health care coverage.

The workers have been without a contract August. GETTY IMAGES

The striking workers have about $1.3 billion in Verizon stock holdings, according to the unions.

They voted on proposals including one brought by the Association of Bell-Tel Retirees that seeks the company to require shareholder approval for any executive severance agreement offering a payout of more than triple the base salary.

Verizon shareholders rejected this proposal on Thursday, according to Don Dunn, a union representative and Long Island, New York-based Fios field technician, who attended the meeting.

Verizon said last week it had presented an updated and "final" offer to the unions, including a wage increase of 7.5 percent. The company, which has been scaling back its Fios and legacy landline business, wants workers to shoulder more health care costs and be open to relocating to new job locations.

The union rejected the new proposal and the parties remain far apart. REUTERS

BRIEF

Prosecutor removes herself from Chicago cop's murder trial

Chicago's top prosecutor removed herself from the murder trial of police officer Jason Van Dyke on Thursday and asked the judge to appoint a special prosecutor to handle the politically sensitive case, which set off protests last year.

Cook County State's Attorney Anita Alvarez, who lost her re-election bid earlier this year in an uproar over her taking a year to charge Van Dyke, said a special prosecutor would mean fewer delays in the trial and ensure continuity after she leaves her job.

Van Dyke, a white police officer, is charged with first-degree murder in the October 2014 death of black 17-year-old Laquan McDonald, who was shot 16 times. Van Dyke is out on bail pending trial.

Alvarez made the motion at a hearing where Cook County Judge Vincent Gaughan had been scheduled to hear arguments regarding a petition by civil rights lawyers alleging that Alvarez was biased and asking that she be removed from the case.

REUTERS

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RACE FOR THE WHITE HOUSE

BARTENDER, ANOTHER ROUND OF BITTERNESS!

THE FOREMAN OPINION

TOM FOREMAN

Well done! Huzzah! Let me hoist a glass to both major political parties because I didn't think they could pull it off, but they have. Out of roughly 320 million Americans, they have found the two most disliked presidential contenders in a quarter century. For all their polls, focus groups and nationwide research the parties answered America's desperate cry for a unifying leader with a resounding promise of more division.

It's a miracle!

Now before all you hyper-partisan types get in a twist, let me agree to some points. Do some people truly believe in Hillary Clinton? Yes, they adore her. Do some voters think Donald Trump will be the savior of the nation? Yes, they think he is fantastic.

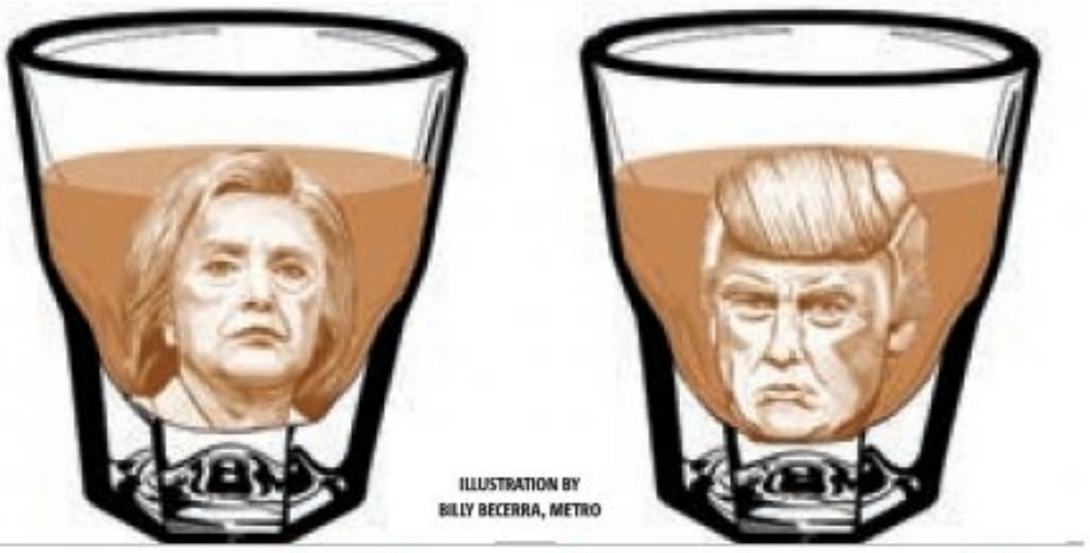
But more don't.

If these two are the nominees come November (and they will be, barring something truly unforeseen) the majority of Americans will likely not be voting to support a candidate but to oppose one. In a recent CNN/ORC poll, only 49 percent of voters have a "favorable" view of Hillary Clinton, only 41 percent think well of Trump. Her "unfavorable" rating is better than his (49 to 56 percent) but talk about being damned by faint praise.

This is not pure partisanship, as much as the party faithful claim. Each of these candidates is undeniably, statistically weak heading into the general election. We've had other candidates even in this cycle that more Americans liked and trusted better, including the still-clinging-on-by-his-nails Bernie Sanders. But as much as voters at large may want unifying candidates, the party faithful do not. They want to win. They want it their way. And they turned out in the primaries and caucuses to make it happen.

Indeed, faced with rampant electoral cynicism, horrific approval ratings for Congress and an utterly dysfunctional state of political discourse, our nation's two main parties responded with a rousing shout of "Bartender! Another round!"

And next January when someone raises a hand to be sworn in as president, I fear most of us will need a drink.



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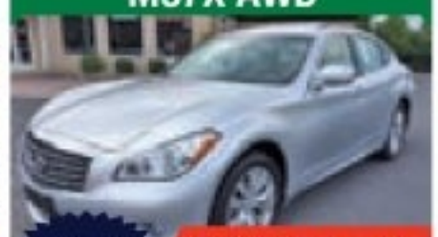
Navigation $409/Month

2012 MERCEDES C250 AMG

Navigation $272/Month

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Like New! $245/Month

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TV-DVD/Navi $303/Month

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Like New! $326/Month

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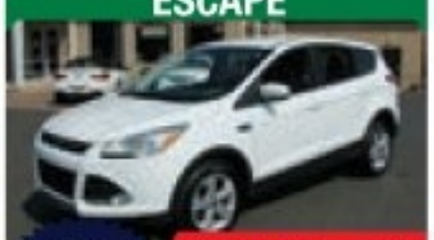
2015 FORD ESCAPE

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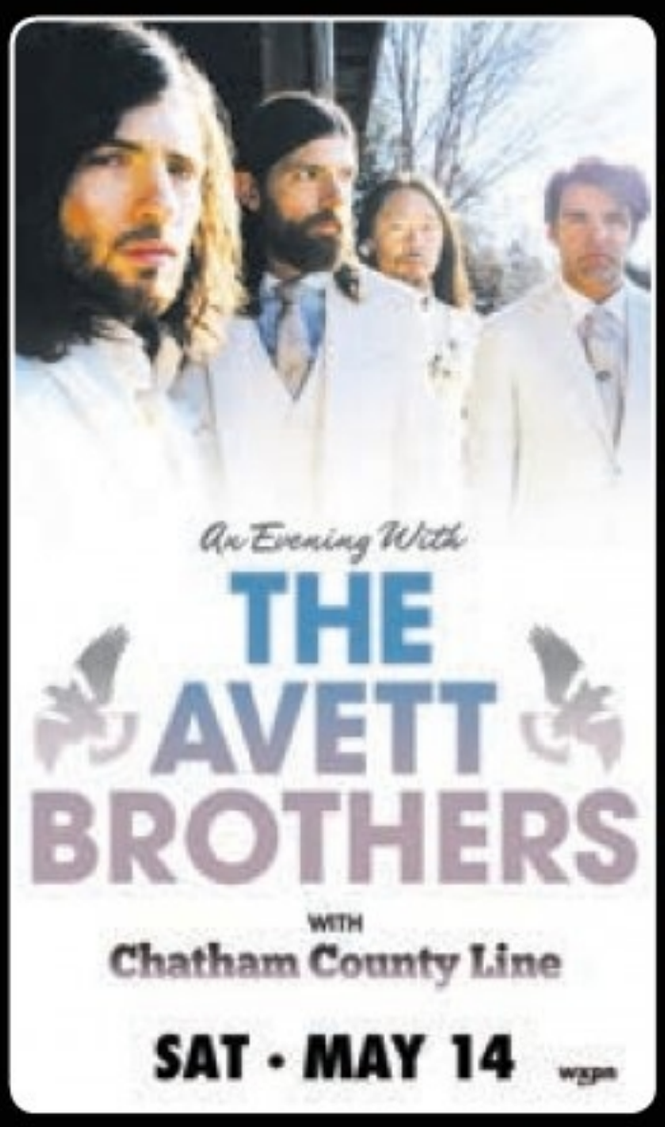

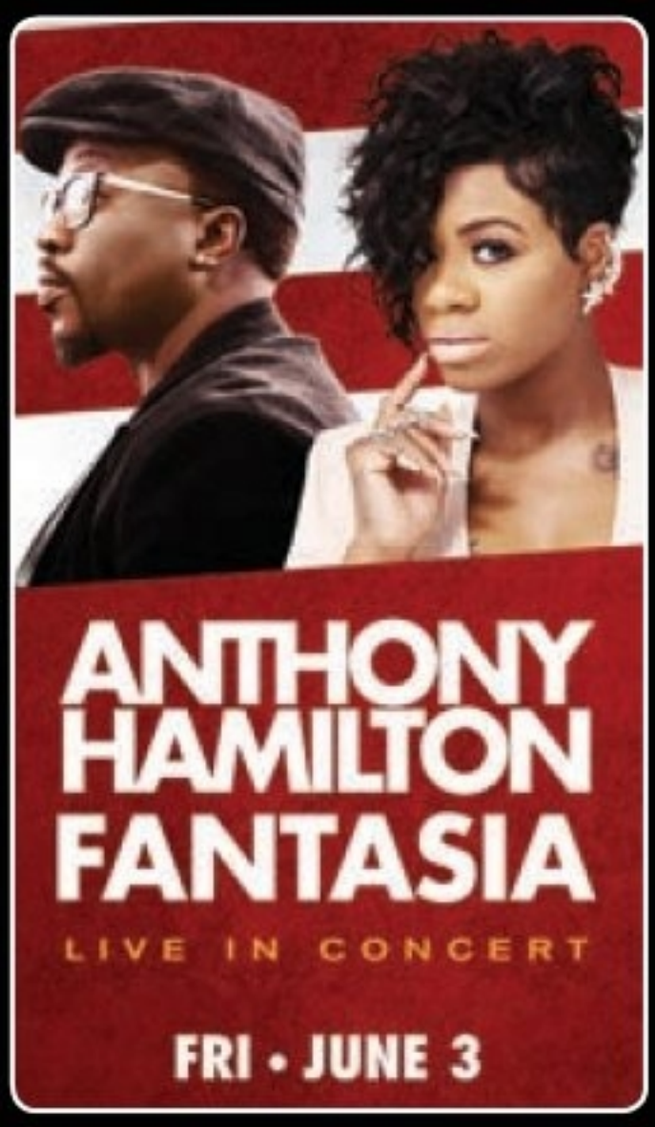

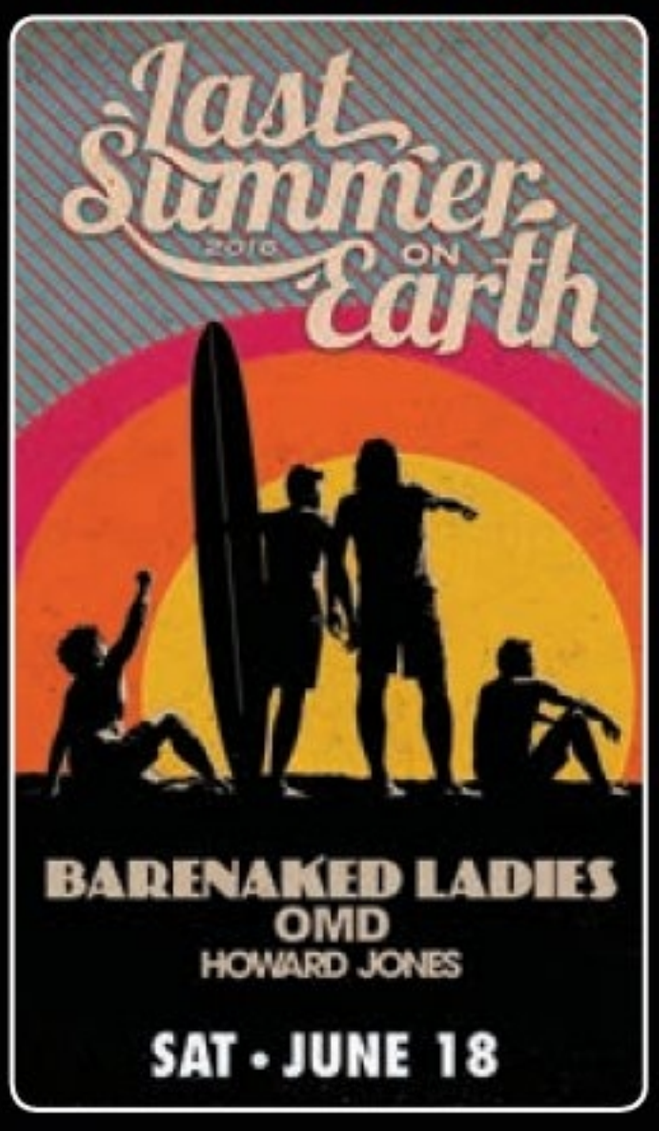

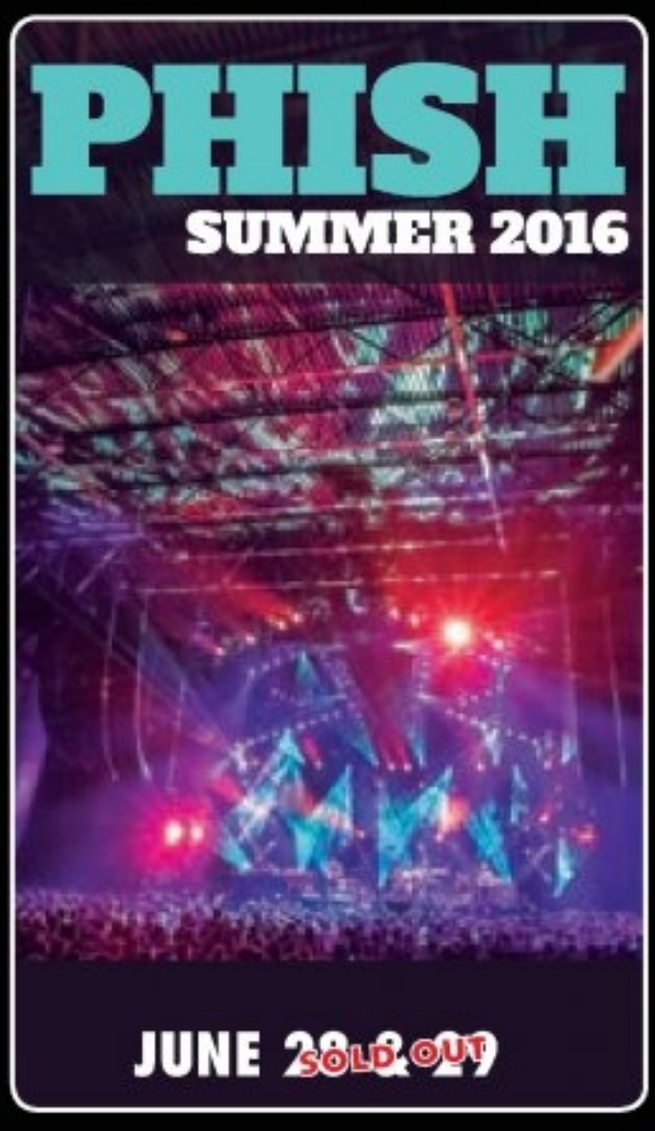

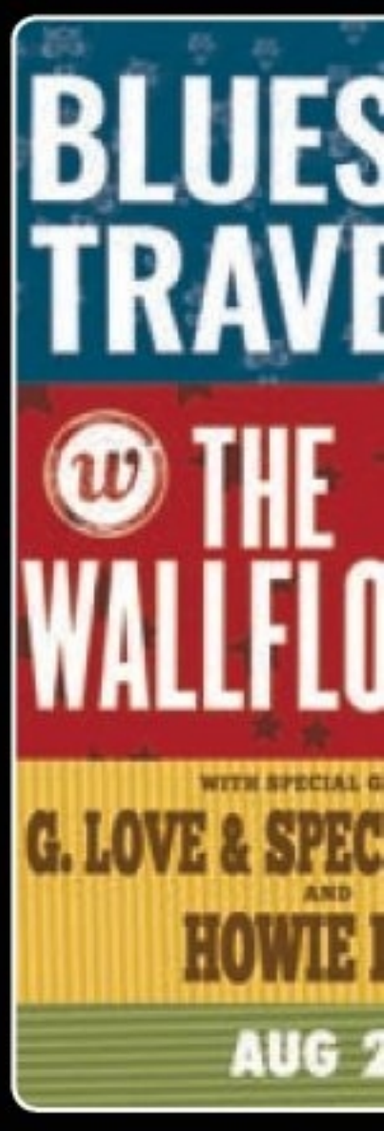

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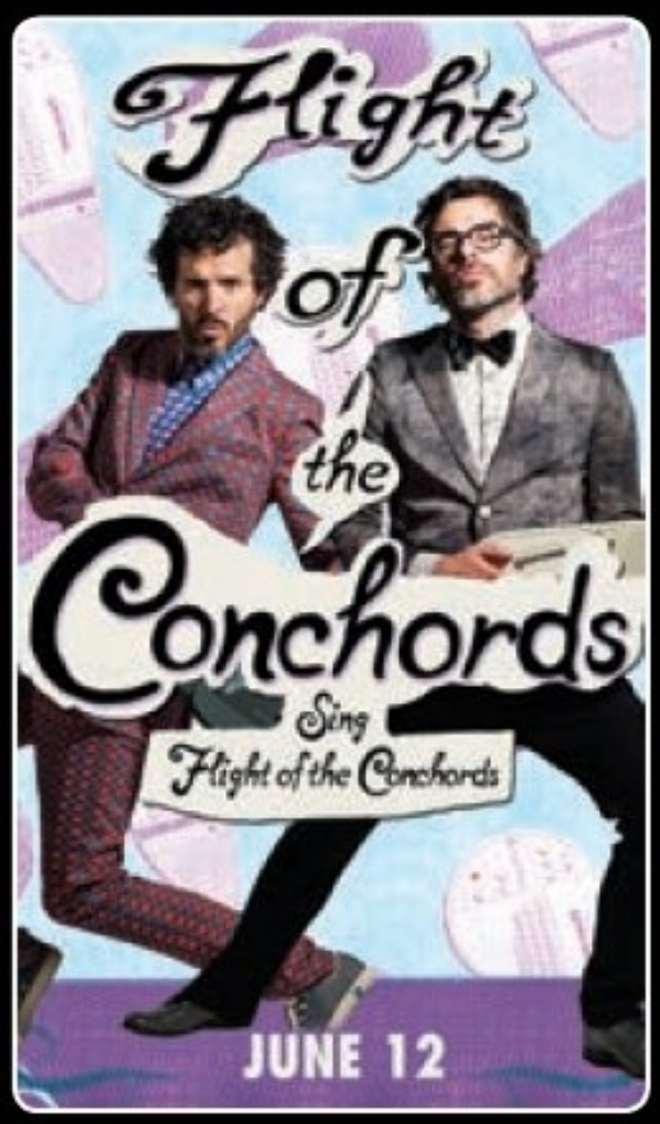

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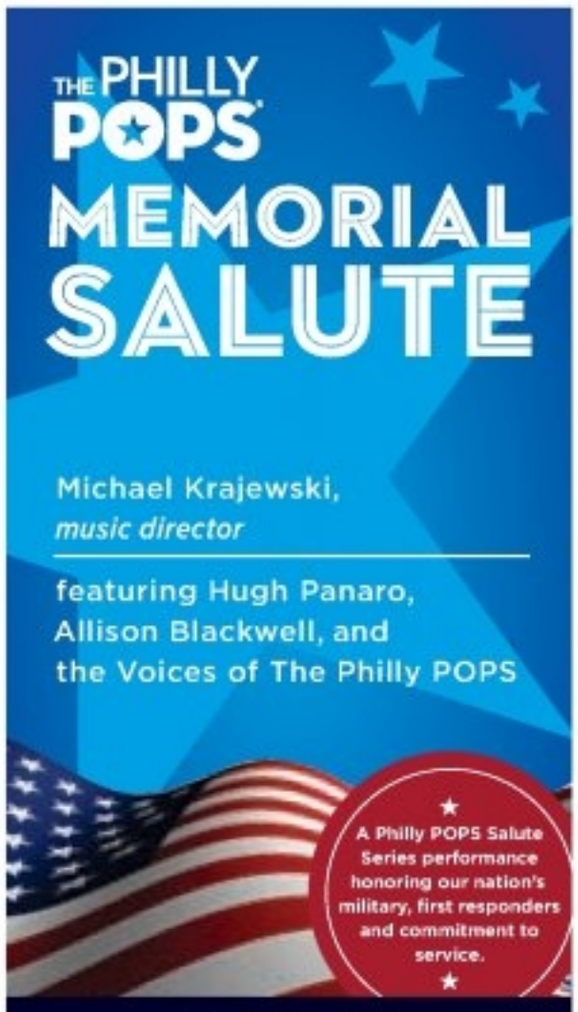
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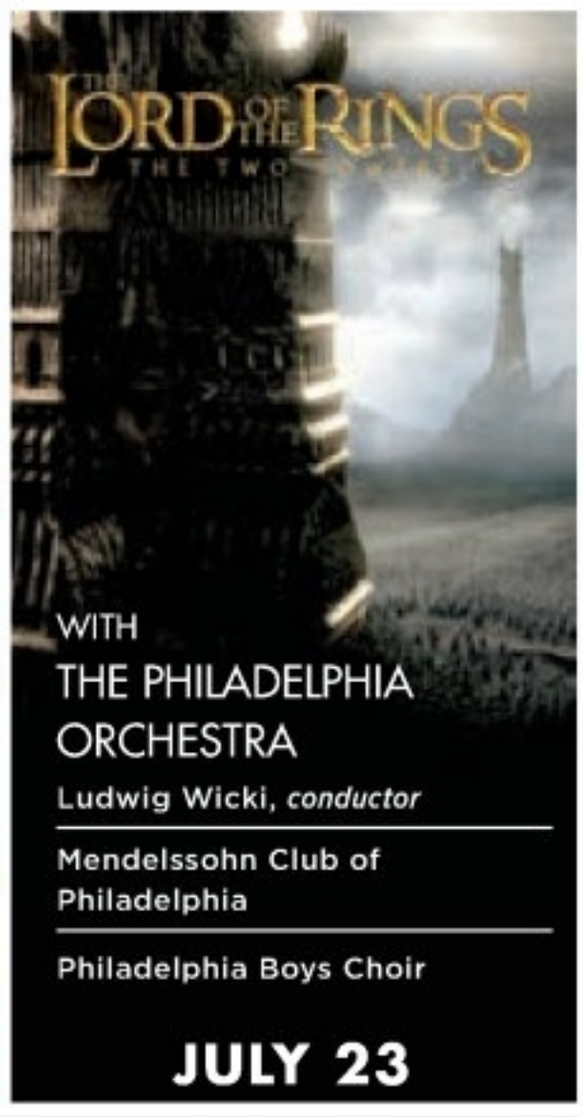

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THE FUN STARTS HERE

Summer movie preview: blockbusters vs. indies

There are a lot of films opening this summer. We tend to think of the season as one of big, dumb blockbusters. But for every comic book movie or sequel or Kevin Hart vehicle, there's a little flick well worth your time. Here's how to keep a balance of both.

MATT PRIGGE

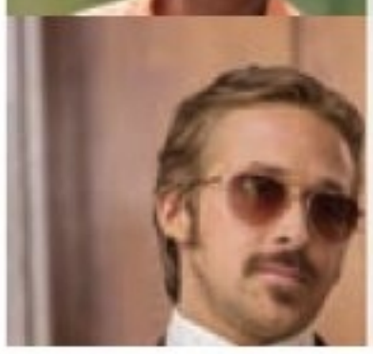
"Captain America: Civil War" (May 6)/ "A Bigger Splash" (May 6)

Common connection: Hanging with the gods

Believe it or not, there's only one official Marvel film this summer, and it comes right at the start. Ignore Cap's name in the title: This is basically an Avengers movie, with many of America's most beloved icons (plus Jeremy Renner's Hawkeye) getting into a royal rumble. But know who's cooler than all of them? Tilda Swinton. Instead she's in her own battle royale: In the Euro vacation pic "A Bigger Splash," she plays a rocker nonplussed when her vacation is ruined by an old flame (Ralph Fiennes, and his penis).

"A Bigger Splash"
TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX

"Southside With You"
MATT DINERSTEIN



"The Nice Guys"
DANIEL MCFADDEN

"The Nice Guys" (May 20)/ "Southside with You" (Aug. 26)

Common connection: Romance

One of the great practitioners of the buddy-movie actioner, Shane Black (author of "Lethal Weapon," "The Last Boy Scout," etc.) pairs Russell Crowe with Ryan Gosling for some jot-down-able one-liners. But, as usual, the dudes are really in love, as are pre-President Barack Obama and Michelle Robinson (Parker Sawyers and Tika Sumpter) in "Southside With You," which reimagines the First Couple's first sorta-date.

"The Angry Birds Movie" (May 20)/ "Cafe Society" (July 29)

Common connection: Established brands

You bought the app game for a couple bucks once, so how else are the "Angry Birds" people going to make their cash back? Make a supersize cartoon with name voices, that's how. There likely won't be as many "AB" installments as there are in the Woody Allen machine, which this year hits its 47th film with a 1930s romance between Kristen Stewart and Jesse Eisenberg.

"X-Men: Apocalypse" (May 27)/"Captain Fantastic" (July 8)

Common connection: Agents of destruction

Oscar Isaac is the blue meanie out to the blow up the world or something in the latest "X-Men" romp. He's no good, and neither is Viggo Mortensen's papa in the indie "Captain Fantastic," who's raised his six kids in the middle of nowhere, denying them contact with the outside world and not happy when they're set free.

"Warcraft" (June 10)/"Love & Friendship" (May 13)

Common connection: Hostile grounds

A bunch of aggros battle it out in the inevitable "War of Warcraft" movie, which was at least helmed by David Bowie's talented son, Duncan Jones ("Moon"). But battling beasties have nothing on the polite, articulate, undermining wealth monsters of Jane Austen, whose novella "Lady Jane" gets a hilariously quippy adaptation from the peerlessly droll Whit Stillman ("Metropolitan," "The Last Days of Disco").

"The Conjuring 2" (June 10)/ "Weiner" (May 20)

Continued on Page 20

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Sabrina Breeden, Jennifer Dawson, Jennifer Francis, Kimberly Bellamy, Courtney Sims, Brian Jenkins, Benjamin Bosewell, Benjamin Boswell

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Janeen Milton, Topeka Williams, DANA HARGROVE- MOORE, Kamila White, Sharaiya Phillips, Georganne Allsop, Kandace George, Benita Ashley, Andrew Jericho, William Carter, Family Dermatology, Joseph Meade

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Roland Clough, Ronald Frank, Daniel Livingston, William Price, Kenneth Haines, Alicia Ferguson

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Continued from Page 19

Common connection: Horror movies
Director James Wan took a break between action movies ("Furious 7," "Aquaman") to scare the bejesus out of us again with the no-brainer sequel to "The Conjuring," his beautifully orchestrated 2013 nerve-wracker. Still, the real world is more terrifying than ghost stories, and few tales are more bone-chilling than that of would-be-political savior Anthony Weiner, whose plight gets its own doc.

"Finding Dory" (June 17)/"The Lobster" (May 13)

Common connection: The sea, the sea
It took 16 years, but Pixar finally followed up one of its more delightful outings, with Albert Brooks back in action with a forgetful Ellen DeGeneres. Parents will likely not take their kids to "The Lobster," in which "Dogtooth" mastermind Yorgos Lanthimos paints a hilariously hellish alt-world where all the single people (including Colin Farrell and John C. Reilly) have 45 days to find a soulmate or they'll be turned into an animal. As you do.

"The BFG" (July 1)/"Swiss Army Man" (July 1)

Common connection: Friendship
Steven Spielberg drags his "Bridge of Spies" Oscar-winner Mark Rylance into the whimsical but mordant world of Roald Dahl for this mostly nice tale of a little girl who happens upon an enormous friend. Meanwhile, Paul Dano makes a pal of his own in the Sundance shocker "Swiss Army Man." It just turns out to be a farting corpse (Daniel Radcliffe).

"Ghostbusters" (July 15)/"Wiener-Dog" (June 24)

Common connection: Reboots (of sorts)
Men's rights activists are pissed about the all-girl "Ghostbusters," though that also means they have bad taste. Despite the meh trailer, you can probably trust that director Paul Feig ("Bridesmaids," "Spy") knows what he's doing. He's returning to a beloved series, while in "Wiener-Dog" Todd Solondz resurrects his "Welcome to the Dollhouse" punching bag Dawn Wiener, who is now played by Greta Gerwig.

"Star Trek Beyond" (July 22)/"Indignation" (July 22)

Common connection: The past comes back
Despite being brain-drained, the "Star Trek" series still improbably brings back a Vietnam-era classic, even if now it's about 80 percent action, 20 percent deep thought. Speaking of life during wartime, Philip Roth gets another movie: a look at repressed New Jersey circa the Korean War, from his 2008 novel.

"Independence Day: Resurgence"
CLAUDETTE BARIUS

"Independence Day: Resurgence" (June 24)/"High-Rise" (May 13)

Common connection: All-star mayhem
Jeff Goldblum, Bill Pullman and bland old Liam Hemsworth battle some more aliens in the 20-years-later sequel to an endearingly dumb blockbuster. If you're too respectable for that, why don't you try the mad stab at J.G. Ballard's classic novel "High-Rise," in which Tom Hiddleston, Sienna Miller, Elisabeth Moss and others battle an arguably worse threat: the downfall of society, at least inside an apartment complex.

"High-Rise"
MAGNOLIA

"Jason Bourne" (July 29)/"De Palma" (June 10)

Common connection: Fighting the system
Matt Damon's superfreak assassin takes back the reins of his biggest franchise after Jeremy Renner couldn't cut it. Once again he'll fight a government wing trying to rein him in.

Know who also knows what it's like to fight the man? Filmmaker Brian De Palma, whose controversial (but sometimes hit) films ("Carrie," "The Untouchables," "Blow Out") get a deep dive in this doc from superfans Noah Baumbach and Jake Kasdan.

"Suicide Squad" (Aug. 5)/"The Neon Demon" (June)

Common connection: Dangerous monsters
A comic book "Dirty Dozen," DC's squad of anti-heroes get what looks like a pretty nuts film, with Will Smith, Margot Robbie and others trying to save the world, if they don't destroy it first. But whatever: Even they aren't as nasty as the aspiring models in Nicolas Winding Refn's stylish "The Neon Demon," in which Elle Fanning takes on Christina Hendricks and some serious porno lighting.

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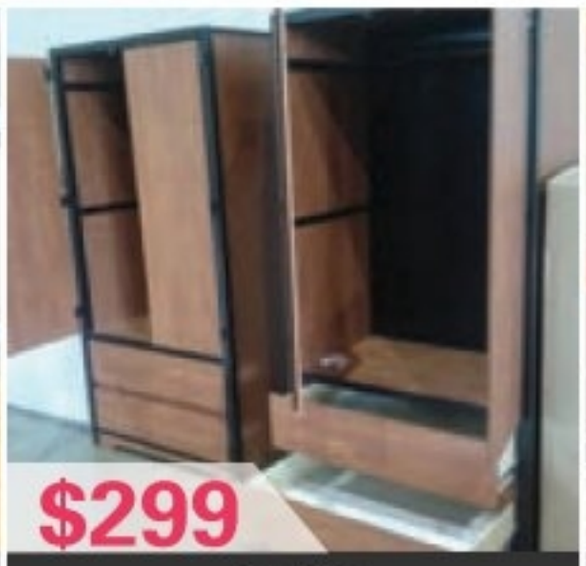

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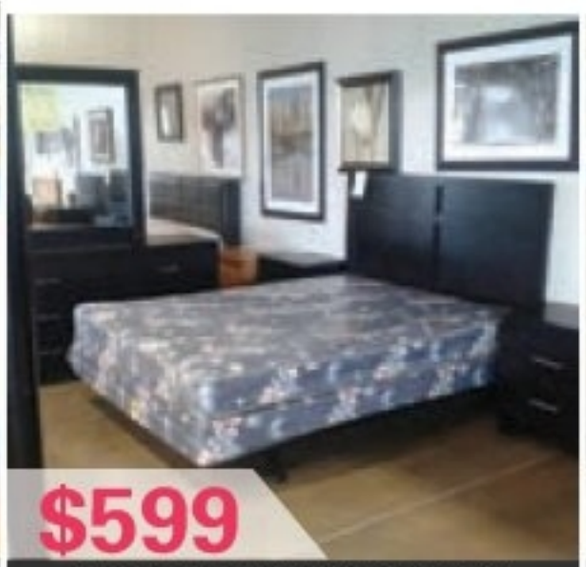

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Where to get your comics on Free Comic Book Day

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MIKE FENN
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As every comic book geek knows, the first Saturday in May is Free Comic Book Day! On Saturday, May 7, comic book stores throughout Philly will hand out select special issues to longtime fans and curiosity seekers alike.

We compiled a list of the best comic book shops in town to help you plan your travels this year:

Amalgam Comics celebrates their first Free Comic Book Day. JASMIN CARROLL

Amalgam Comics and Coffeehouse

2578 Frankford Ave., Facebook.com/amalgamphilly
The city's newest comic book store opened in December on Frankford Avenue in Kensington, specializes in the promotion of characters and stories starring women and people of color. Visitors to the store can even relax with their favorite book and a hot beverage at the in-store coffee bar.

Brave New Worlds

55 S. 2nd St., Bravenewworldcomics.com
A longtime staple of Old City, Brave New Worlds is a unique oasis in the art galleries and shops that otherwise line 2nd Street just north of Market. While it naturally carries the latest Marvel and DC releases, Brave New Worlds also sells work by local Philly artists and writers. Plus, it's one of the few places outside of the Internet where you can buy Cards Against Humanity.

Fat Jack's Comic Crypt

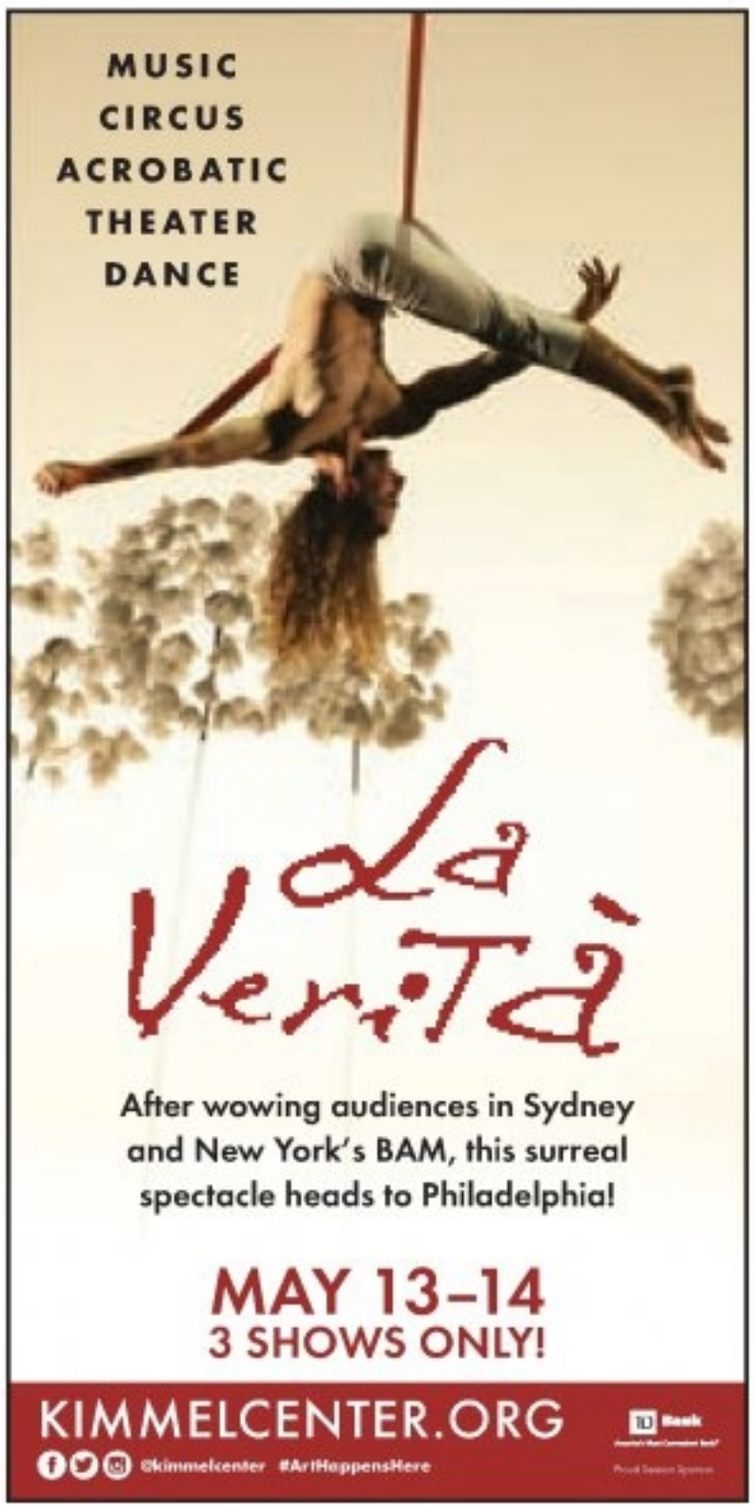
2006 Sansom St., Comicrypt.com
If your travels take you to the Rittenhouse Square neighborhood, you have to stop by this Sansom Street shop with one of the largest back issue collections around! Pet the store's cats, peruse local geeky event brochures and pick up your tabletop gaming needs here as you collect your free books.

Atomic City Comics

638 South St., Facebook.com/atomiccitycomics
This location is going all-out for Free Comic Book Day. The staffers are holding "Atomic Con" all day, which not only includes your free comic books, but also live entertainment and even a costume contest! The event coincides with the South Street Spring Festival, so expect hundreds of fellow fans right there with you!

South Philly Comics

1840 E. Passyunk Ave., Southphillycomics.com
Possessing a knowledgeable staff and even a great selection of "real" books (you know, where actual words replace caped superheroes), no trip to East Passyunk in South Philly is complete without a visit here.



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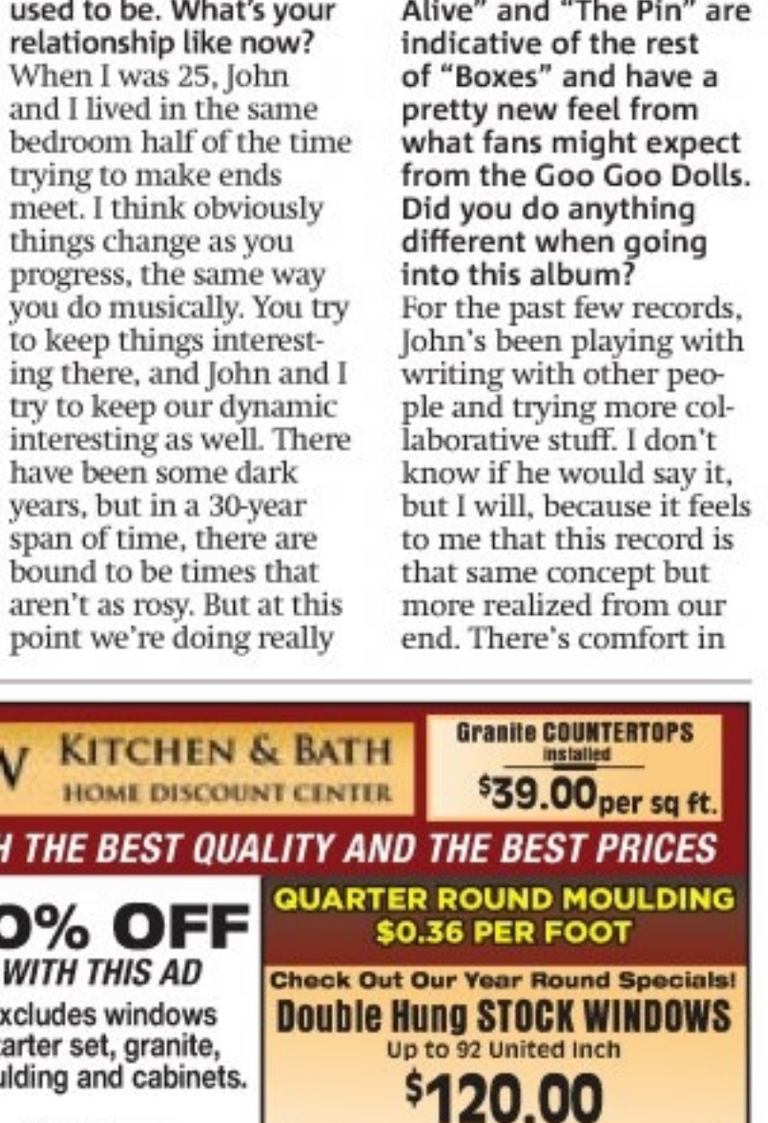
Checking off 'Boxes'

The Goo Goo Dolls look forward with their latest album.



RACHEL RACZKA
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rachel.raczka@metro.us

The Goo Goo Dolls' 1998 album "Dizzy Up the Girl" is arguably one of the most loved of the millennial generation — releasing the likes of "Iris," "Broadway" and "Slide" — following '95's "A Boy Named Goo" (featuring the unforgettable "Name") and pre-empting 2002's "Gutterflower" ("Here is Gone," "Big Machine").

Today the Dolls' original members John Rzeznik and Robby Takac are gearing up to release "Boxes," an anticipated step forward in the band's extensive repertoire. The Warner Bros. release, out today, features "So Alive," a dynamic, poppy tune made for windows-down, summertime drives. We catch up with Takac in Buffalo, New York, where he discusses balancing the band's legacy with its future, the hipness of "the '90s" and how the Goo Goo Dolls got their name.

Johnny and you have been working as the Goo Goo Dolls for three decades, and you always hear those stories about bands that stick together for the music, but aren't still friends like they used to be. What's your relationship like now?

When I was 25, John and I lived in the same bedroom half of the time trying to make ends meet. I think obviously things change as you progress, the same way you do musically. You try to keep things interesting there, and John and I try to keep our dynamic interesting as well. There have been some dark years, but in a 30-year span of time, there are bound to be times that aren't as rosy. But at this point we're doing really good, we're keeping our eye on what we're doing.

Some of the already released singles "So Alive" and "The Pin" are indicative of the rest of "Boxes" and have a pretty new feel from what fans might expect from the Goo Goo Dolls. Did you do anything different when going into this album?

For the past few records, John's been playing with writing with other people and trying more collaborative stuff. I don't know if he would say it, but I will, because it feels to me that this record is that same concept but more realized from our end. There's comfort in

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Takac, left, and Rzeznik find a balance of new and old. BOB MUSSEL

that process this time and we knew what we needed to expect. This record feels very fresh because of that.

As a band that's still so strongly associated with the '90s, how does it feel now knowing that it's actually become a trendy decade?
It's like keeping an old coat in your closet: eventually it's in style again. We never really went away [between the '90s and now], and we've always tried to do something that could work in this day and age with varying degrees of success. We know we're not going to leave the building without playing "Iris" and "Broadway," but we're equally excited to play the new stuff for people. So that's how we combat those feelings.

I read somewhere that the name Goo Goo Dolls was a spur of the moment decision for you — do you ever wish you could change it?
Every day. [Laughs] It's probably helped us because it's a memorable name, but you never expect to be a grown man explaining to people why your band is called the Goo Goo Dolls.

Where did it come from?
We were just kids and we had to come up with a name for an ad for a show we were doing. We grabbed it out of an old True Detective magazine from the '50s that our drummer had in his apartment. At the time, we were a noisy, fast punk rock band, for lack of a better term, and the name sounded wildly inappropriate. And we liked that it had a lot of O's in it.

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Anthony Mackie wants a Hardy Boys movie

The Marvel films' resident Falcon says he grew up more into mysteries than comics.

MATT PRIGGE
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matt.prigge@metro.us

Anthony Mackie files his fourth Marvel Cinematic Universe appearance as Falcon, Avenger and buddy to Chris Evans' Steve Rogers, in "Captain America: Civil War." MARVEL

Marvel doesn't fill its films with he-men and beefcakes. They often go for interesting actors from independent and international cinema. One of those is Anthony Mackie, the acclaimed star of "Half Nelson," "The Hurt Locker" and "Triple 9" — in addition to big-timers like "Real Steel," "Pain & Gain" and "The Night Before." Since "Captain America: The Winter Soldier," he's played Sam Wilson, aka Falcon, the winged friend of Chris Evans' Steve Rogers. Falcon returns for "Captain America: Civil War," joining his buddy's side when the Avengers split over whether or not their do-good-ery should be regulated by the government.

I might be the only person you're speaking to today who didn't grow up a comic book nerd. Were you one?
I wasn't at all. It's funny: Every time I meet somebody they say, "Oh, I was such a comic book nerd growing up." I'm like, "That's interesting, because when I look for a comic book store I don't know where they are. So if all these people were reading comic books when I was a kid, why did all the comic book stores go out of business?" But growing up I would read mysteries, like "The Hardy Boys." I didn't read comics at all.

I can't believe there's never been a "Hardy Boys" movie. That should be the next franchise.
I agree, I agree. I was joking with a friend of mine that we should get a group of black dudes together and make a "Hardy Boys" movie. That would be hilarious.

Well, you can do that. I assume being a part of the Marvel Cinematic Universe gives you some power.
One would think, but not so much.

Really?
No. Not at all. [Laughs] I thought that would happen when I signed up as Falcon. I thought I'd be able to do my small, $2 million projects that I feel are just as important as these films. But it's not as cut-and-dry as you'd think it would be.

Indie movies are in such a weird space right now.
I did this movie last year — this amazing little movie that Paul Bettany [his "Captain America" co-star, as it happens] directed called "Shelter." People just couldn't find it. It just wasn't in enough theaters. And now it's on Netflix, and people are like, "This is the best movie ever!" I'm like, "No sh—." [Laughs] It's frustrating because I'm proud of my work, same as I'm proud to be a part of the Avengers. But people will see one but they won't see both.

Keeping it real

With these Marvel films, do you sometimes watch the stunts and CGI your character is doing onscreen and go, "Oh, I did that?"
[Laughs] It's funny, because on "Cap 2," which was my first Marvel movie, I was like, "I'm going to do all my own stunts. Tom Cruise does his stunts; I'm going to do my stunts." And about a week into it I thought, "This is the dumbest thing I've ever done." [Laughs] It hurts really bad to do those f—ing stunts. When I watch the movies I'm really excited to see what my stuntman was able to pull off while I was sitting in my trailer.

You didn't even know you were in "Avengers: Age of Ultron" until you saw it, right?
I didn't. I had no idea. They fly you in and shoot little stuff. Then the movie comes out and I'm like, "Holy s—, I'm in the movie." [Laughs]

Is that how you wound up appearing as the only member of the Avengers in "Ant-Man"?
That was the same thing. I was hanging out and they were like, "What are you doing next weekend?" "Nothing." "Cool, why don't you come down to Atlanta and shoot something for us?" I thought it was a test or something for the next movie. It just happened to be "Ant-Man."

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76ers in flux as lottery fate will determine team's future

The Sixers have the best chance at getting the top overall pick in the 2016 NBA draft.

JEFF MCMENAMIN
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The 76ers and faithful fans are praying they can take one of the drafts' top prizes with the first or second overall pick. GETTY IMAGES

As North Dakota State quarterback Carson Wentz made his way across the podium last week as the No. 2 pick to the Eagles in the 2016 NFL draft, Sixers fans across the area couldn't help but be a little bit jealous and nervous at the same time by the measured success of bleeding green nation on draft night.

The Eagles have potentially locked up a franchise centerpiece for the next decade in Wentz, in a draft they were originally slotted to pick 13th in. Meanwhile, the Sixers are less than two weeks away from another NBA draft lottery in limbo, where their future relies once again on the selection of ping pong balls.

After finishing the season with the worst record (10-72) in the NBA for the first time during the team's rebuild now three-seasons and running, the Sixers enter the lottery with a greater chance at getting the No. 4 pick (32.3 percent) than they do at getting the No. 1 pick (26.9 percent) in June.

Not having the chance at the draft's consensus top two picks, Brandon Ingram of Duke and Ben Simmons of LSU, would be yet another blow to the franchise, and one that would put a stamp on Sam Hinkie's resignation while sending a message to teams throughout the league on the cautionary tale of tanking in the NBA.

The existence of chance in Hinkie's rebuilding strategy is ultimately what put the Sixers into their current position. If they weren't jumped by the Cavaliers in the 2014 draft lottery, the Sixers would've taken rising stars Andrew Wiggins or Jabari Parker. If they weren't jumped by the Lakers last year, they would've took promising D'Angelo Russell and the point guard narrative for this past season would disappear.

Even in trades, the Sixers may end up on the wrong side of the coin. The Sixers ultimately lost in the late first round picks (Nos. 24, 26) they traded for that convey this year's draft. The protections on each pick severely hurt their value, as they should have conveyed to the Sixers in the teens of last June's draft.

The Sixers are also hoping for their top-three protected first round pick owned by the Lakers to convey in this year's draft that they acquired in the Michael Carter-Williams trade with the Bucks. The Lakers currently have a 55.8 percent chance of acquiring a top-three selection and a 44.2 percent chance that it falls outside of the top-three, conveying to the Sixers.

With that pick, the Sixers could add yet another franchise building block to the team, such as Oklahoma's Buddy Hield or Providence's Kris Dunn. But for now, it's nothing more than a pipe dream.

In reality, the Sixers could end up with the No. 3 pick for the third-straight draft, one pick below the beloved Eagles.

May 17, the franchise will get its answer. Until then, it's hard not to focus on the tangible results of Wentz to the Eagles. Whether you agree with the trade or not, the franchise can at least wake up knowing where their future lies. For the Sixers, it's still a wait and see.

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Best bets at Kentucky Derby

Metro's got the skinny on where to put your money before the Triple Crown kicks off this weekend.

ROBERT CRISCOLA
@ItsGood2BeKing
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Churchill Downs will be the site for one of the biggest sporting events of the year this weekend; the Kentucky Derby (Saturday, 6:30 p.m., NBC). The $2 million, one and one-quarter mile race drew a field of 20 plus two also-eligibles, but only one can win. Metro digs in and tells you who the top three contenders are.

1 Exaggerator

Post Position: 11
Morning-Line Odds: 8-1
Exaggerator was perhaps the most impressive of the final prep winners, drawing off in the Santa Anita Derby by more than six lengths. That race was run in the mud and his other big win came over a muddy going in the Delta Downs Jackpot last fall, but he's shown enough ability in the San Vicente and San Felipe Stakes over fast tracks to make a strong case that he's the best 3-year-old colt in training. Exaggerator was sired by Curlin, one of the richest horses of all time who hit the board in all three Triple Crown races in 2007, so he shouldn't mind the 10 furlong distance. Kent Desormeaux rides for trainer Keith Desormeaux, his brother, and while Keith is seeking his first Derby victory, Kent has three career wins in this race. Exaggerator should sit an ideal trip in midpack, passing the leaders late and holding off the deep closers.

The Triple Crown begins anew with the Kentucky Derby, on NBC Saturday afternoon. GETTY IMAGES

2 My Man Sam

Post Position: 6
Morning-Line Odds: 20-1
New York horseplayers will be very familiar with the connections of My Man Sam; Chad Brown trains and Irad Ortiz Jr. rides. My Man Sam has just one win to his credit in four starts but he's run fast by all accounts. In the Blue Grass Stakes, his final prep for this race, he was dealt a bad post (14) but managed to rally well from the back of the pack to get second. That willingness to overcome adversity is exactly what he'll need to do well in this race. He is a long-shot with a very realistic chance to win the "Run for the Roses" on Saturday.

3 Mor Spirit

Post Position: 17
Morning-Line Odds: 12-1
Mor Spirit is based on the West Coast but he has a race under his belt at Churchill Downs; a strong runner-up finish in the Kentucky Jockey Club Stakes last November. He may have lost by several lengths to Exaggerator in the muddy Santa Anita Derby last time out, but it's possible he can turn the tables as his pedigree and running style suggest he'll appreciate the added ground. Also, Mor Spirit outfinished Exaggerator in the San Felipe Stakes last March over a fast track, which is the likely scenario for Saturday. Mor Spirit is trained by Bob Baffert who's won this race four times, including last year with eventual Triple Crown champion American Pharoah. Gary Stevens has the mount, and he has three Derby victories to his credit.

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METRO GOLF

Walnut Lane Golf Club is snug test for iron striking

The first of Metro's Philadelphia golf course reviews heads to Wissahickon for a convenient escape from the city.

EVAN MACY
@evan_macy
evan.macy@metro.us

Walnut Lane is a good spot to work on ball-striking skills. STEVE DAG

Golf season is nearing full swing, and if you're like most Philadelphians who love the game, you might be unaware that the area boasts a bevy of impressive public golf treks for high and low handicappers alike.

Throughout the spring and summer, we'll outline the lay of the land — literally and figuratively — across the Philly golf landscape. We'll start close to the city limits.

If you're a weekend golfer with limited time, a beginner or working on your irons, Walnut Lane Golf Course is a nice way to spend three and a half hours.

The layout is reasonably challenging (try teeing off on the uphill dogleg 12th hole) but also short (just 4,509 yards).

Though it's not as crisply manicured as many public courses in the suburbs, the Wissahickon golf course is a still good investment.

Compared to the alternatives located inside the city limits, Walnut Lane — located just north of Manayunk — has a lot to offer. Save time on your travel, save money (the weekend rate with a cart is $42) and sacrifice just a little bit of distance to get done in a very reasonable amount of time.

"We are a shorter course but the par 3s are challenging," director of golf David Smith said of the par 62 trek. "The distance and length of our course lends to quick play and to beginners. But if par is the expert score you are going after we have some really challenging par 3s. We have some forced carries, some holes you can't miss on certain sides — if you can shoot par on here it is really saying something."

When playing at Walnut Lane it's easy, at times, to forget you are in Philadelphia — a welcome escape. And when standing at the 10th tee, you might forget you're on an executive-length course.

"There are multiple holes that stand out because of the vistas," Smith said. "No. 10 is a neat hole, it is down the hill, it slopes, you have the rock face on the right side so it's very defined."

Local knowledge tip:
"There's no question that the most important shot in golf is the tee shot. If you can put the ball off the tee in play here on all 18 holes, you're going to score," director David Smith said. "Make sure you play to the fairway and play to your ability. You're not going to do well if you come out here and hit the driver when you shouldn't."

Price range:
From $20 (to walk in the afternoon) to $42 (to ride on weekend mornings)

Website:
www.walnutlanegolf.com

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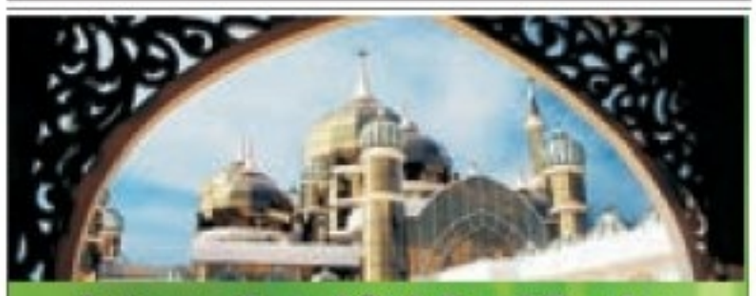

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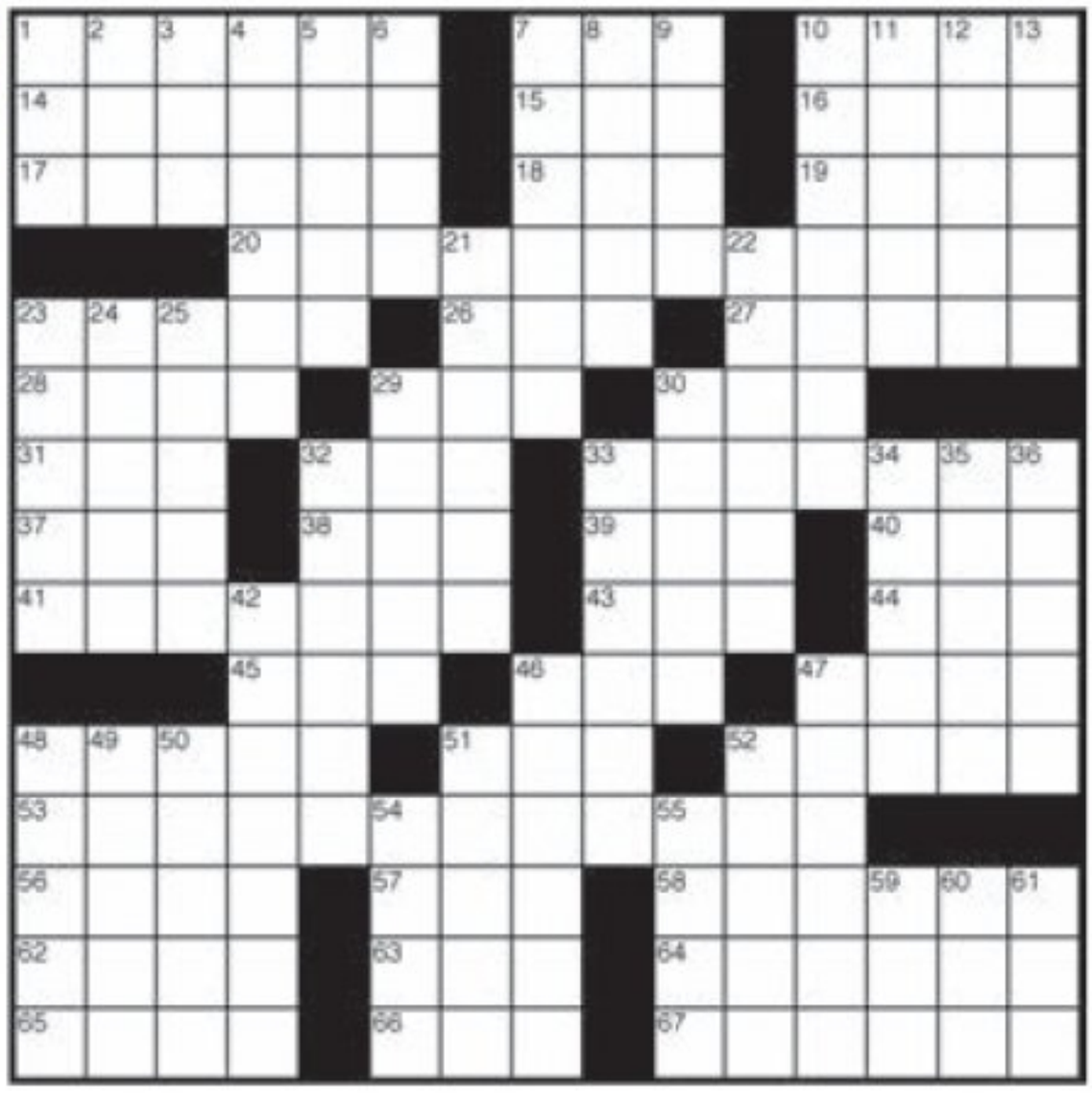

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Excludes ALL: cosmetics/fragrances, Deals of the Day, Doorbusters/web busters, electrics/electronics, Everyday Values (EDV), furniture/mattresses, Last Act, Macy's Backstage, rugs, specials, super buys, All-Clad, Breville, Dyson, Fitbit, Frye, Hanky Panky, Jack Spade, Kate Spade, KitchenAid Pro Line, Le Creuset, Levi's, Marc Jacobs, Michele watches, New Era, Nike on Field, Sam Edelman, Samsung watches, Shun, Stuart Weitzman, The North Face, Theory, Tumi, Vitamix, Wacoal, Wüsthof, athletic clothing, shoes & accessories; Dallas Cowboys merchandise, designer jewelry, gift cards, jewelry trunk shows, macys.com, previous purchases, select licensed depts., services, special orders, special purchases, tech watches. Cannot be combined with any savings pass/coupon, extra discount or credit offer, except opening a new Macy's account. Dollar savings are allocated as discounts off each eligible item, as shown on receipt. When you return an item, you forfeit the savings allocated to that item. This coupon has no cash value & may not be redeemed for cash, used to purchase gift cards or applied as payment or credit to your account. Purchase must be $25 or $50 or more, exclusive of tax & delivery fees.

the magic of ★macy's.com

Macy's pass discount doesn't apply to doorbusters. Fine jewelry doorbusters are only at stores that carry fine jewelry. Free bra and/or 75% off bra must be of equal or lesser value than purchased bra(s); returns must include free and/or 75% bra & purchased bra(s). REG. & ORIG. PRICES ARE OFFERING PRICES AND SAVINGS MAY NOT BE BASED ON ACTUAL SALES. SOME ORIG. PRICES NOT IN EFFECT DURING THE PAST 90 DAYS. ONE DAY SALE PRICES IN EFFECT 5/5 5PM-CLOSING-5/7/2016. *Intermediate price reductions may have been taken. ‡All carat weights (ct. t.w.) are approximate; variance may be .05 carat. Jewelry photos may be enlarged or enhanced to show detail. Fine jewelry at select stores; log on to macys.com for locations. Almost all gemstones have been treated to enhance their beauty & require special care, log on to macys.com/gemstones or ask your sales professional. Doorbuster items are available while supplies last. Extra savings are taken off already reduced prices, "doorbuster" prices reflect extra savings. Advertised merchandise may not be carried at your local Macy's & selection may vary by store. Prices & merchandise may differ at macys.com. Electric items & luggage carry mfrs' warranties; **to see a mfr's warranty at no charge before purchasing, visit a store or write to:** Macy's Warranty Dept., PO Box 1026, Maryland Heights, MO 63043, attn: Consumer Warranties. N6040297.

OPEN A MACY'S ACCOUNT FOR EXTRA 20% SAVINGS THE FIRST 2 DAYS, UP TO $100, WITH MORE REWARDS TO COME. Macy's credit card is available subject to credit approval; new account savings valid the day your account is opened and the next day; excludes services, selected licensed departments, gift cards, restaurants, gourmet food & wine. The new account savings are limited to a total of $100; application must qualify for immediate approval to receive extra savings; employees not eligible.